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THE CRUCIAL ROLE OF FLUOROELASTOMERS IN THE RUBBER SECTOR

Dear Colleagues,

General Rubber Goods are used in a large variety of sectors and applications, from the transport and renewable energy sectors to construction and chemical and pharmaceutical products. The increasing need for strength, resistance to temperature and chemicals and flexibility have made fluoroelastomers a key component in rubber products. This edition of the newsletter will explore the critical role of fluoroelastomers in the rubber industry, with a particular focus on safety and efficiency across key applications.

If you would like us to deep dive into a specific use of fluoropolymers in the coming months or would be

interested in seeing one of your projects featured as a case study in our newsletter, do not hesitate to get in touch with us. We believe that the voice of our industry stakeholders should be heard!

As ever, please also feel free to share this newsletter with your wider network and invite people to sign up by emailing me at nicolas.robin@plasticseurope.org. Thank you in advance!

Kind regards,
Nicolas Robin

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REGULATORY UPDATES: FLUOROPOLYMERS AND THE EU PFAS RESTRICTION

FPG Outreach to regulatory authorities in Member States

The Fluoropolymers Product Group has launched the outreach to regulatory authorities in Member States, in close cooperation with national and EU-level associations and companies. The objective of the outreach is to raise awareness of the (unintended) socio-economic consequences of a potential PFAS restriction at national and EU level.

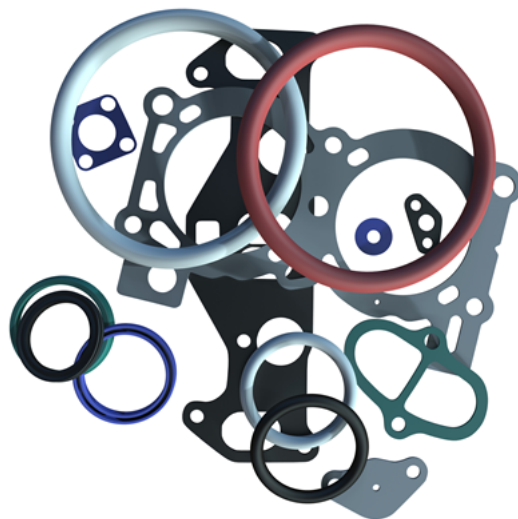
ECHA Webinar on PFAS Restriction

The ECHA webinar on the “Restriction of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) under REACH”,

organised following the launch of the public consultation, took place on 5 April 2023. A recording of the webinar can be accessed [here](#). A detailed document responding to questions raised by stakeholders and webinar participants before and during the event is expected to be available shortly.

Next procedural milestones: Discussions on PFAS in RAC and SEAC coming up in June

ECHA's Risk Assessment Committee (RAC) and Socio-Economic Committee (SEAC) are scheduled to discuss the PFAS REACH restriction dossier during a meeting in June, with industry observers present. The Committees are in charge of preparing the opinions of ECHA on the risks of substances to human health and the environment (RAC) and the socio-economic impact of possible legislative actions on chemicals (SEAC), respectively.



FLUOROELASTOMERS RUBBERS: CRITICAL FOR SAFETY AND EFFICIENCY

Fluoroelastomers are used in rubber industrial goods that have to perform in high demanding environments, including where water and oil resistance qualities are needed. With their unique properties, fluoroelastomers are critical to ensure safety and efficiency by providing increased chemical and temperature resistance over the alternative elastomers.

Fluoroelastomer rubber products are used in rubber hoses, sealings and gaskets among other articles, across a variety of sectors and applications. In particular, fluoroelastomers are often required in light of their chemical compatibility, temperature range and low permeation. The durability of fluoroelastomers also means that materials remain unchanged over extended periods, which allows to reduce costs and maintenance needs. In the transport sector for instance, their low permeation, resistance in broad temperature ranges and sealing performance in several solvents and solvent blends allows vehicles to meet to meet evaporative standards.

Importantly, fluoroelastomers used in rubber goods do not pose a significant risk to human health or the environment when used for intended purpose. Fluoroelastomers used in rubber goods have been shown to meet the OECD's criteria for "polymers of low concern", and as such they do not present significant toxicity concerns, nor can they degrade into other PFAS.

While fluoroelastomers would be replaced by cheaper alternatives if available, it should be noted that there are currently no alternatives that can substitute their use in essential rubber applications. In addition, the production of a number of non fluoroelastomers rubber do required fluoropolymer seals for their production. According to the rubber industry, any reformulation, if ever a substitute is available, could take more than 10 years on research and development to ensure both safety and performance.

**This case study is based on data provided by the [European Tyre & Rubber Manufacturers Association](#).*





We hope you enjoyed this edition of the newsletter.

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If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to the [Fluoropolymers Product Group](#) or find us on [LinkedIn](#).

Do not hesitate to let us know if there are specific topics you would want to know more about!

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